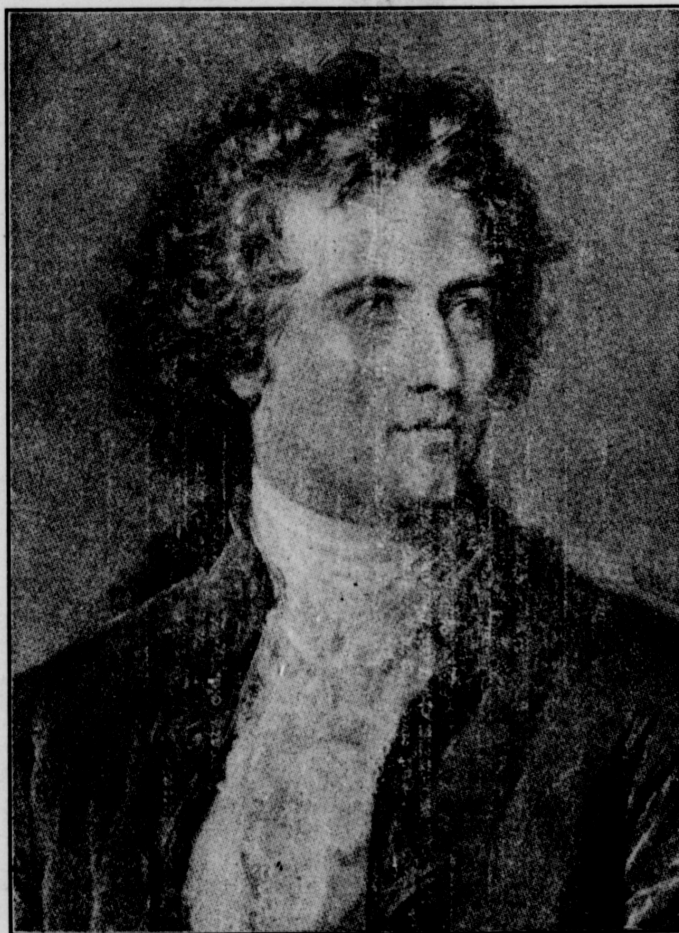


# BLUE GRASS BLADE

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*DEVOTED TO THE PROPAGANDA OF FREEDOM OF THOUGHT*



VON GOETHE.

Great German Dramatist, Poet and Freethinker.

A T Parker  
High and Ashland  
Depos

# Bible Inconsistencies

POINTED ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE ALLEGED DIVINE

REVELATIONS.—SOME NUTS FOR PREACHERS

TO CRACK, IF THEY HAVE TIME.

(By Josephine K. Henry.)

It was smooth sailing for orthodoxy until the human mind began to think and question.

The citadel of Christian superstition is now being stormed and is trembling under the questionings of Reason.

The pulpit has demanded and obtained the protection of the civil law; the clergy from the so-called "sacred desk" proclaim what is unreasonable, improbable and untrue, and the civil law protects them, for no one dare dispute their assertions, however much they may outrage truth. Law and Science must prove their assertions, but not so with Religion. The clergy from their law-protected "coward's castle" issue their proclamations, and silenced congregations are forced to "let it go at that." But the mental reservations of those who occupy the pews find expression through the press. The sea of thought is lashed to white foam, and the unrest in Zion is alarming.

The truth or falsity of the "Holy Bible" is the top root of all the trouble; all this is the fault of the Church. If its Holy Book rests on the eternal rock of truth, it should demand investigation, court inquiry, and once for all settle the paramount question as to whether the Bible is of divine or human authorship,—fallible or infallible. Science and Reason are clamoring for fair treatment, and common-sense refuses to accept anything less. There are all sorts of Ministerial Associations; but one should be formed of the ablest clerics, and its name should be "The Reconcilers," whose duty should be to reconcile the contradictions, explain the impossibilities and absurdities in the "Holy Bible," and remove the doubts of the grand army of skeptics, who are searching for and thirsting for the Truth.

The preacher tells us that God is not the author of evil, taking his text from Deuteronomy xx:19-4 to prove it: "A god of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He," but the inspired Isaiah xiv:7, says: "I make peace and create evil." The Christian claims that "God created ALL things," and that "the devil is the author of evil." If God created ALL things, he must have created the devil. Then, logically, God is the author of evil. Romans ii:11, says: "There is no respect of persons with God;" but in Romans ix:13, it says: "Jacob have I loved; Esau have I hated," yet the history of these two characters shows Esau to have been a superior gentleman in comparison with his twin brother, Jacob, the most dishonest, licentious, trickiest schemer and grafter depicted in Holy Writ, whose progeny swarm in Christian civilization today. If I were going to select from among the Bible gentleman a lovable man I would tell Jacob to "go way back and sit down." Ezekiel xviii:32 says: "I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God," and Psalm cxiv says: "The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works." I should imagine that Ezekiel and David would not be authorities with the people of Galveston, Martinique, San Francisco and Italy, but would think that Jeremiah xliii:14 knew what he was talking about when he makes

God to say: "I will not pity nor spare, nor have mercy, but destroy them."

Ezekiel xviii:20 says: "The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father," but Exodus xx:5 says: "I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations."

Romans ii:13 says: "The doers of the law shall be justified," but the 20th verse of the third chapter says: "By the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified."

Job vii:9 says: "As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away, so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more," yet Paul, who is more often quoted by the clerics than Jesus, says in Corinthians xv:32: "the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised." Here we find Job and Paul in open conflict. As billions of human beings have gone down to the grave and not one of them has yet been "raised" by the "sound of the trumpet," Job up to this time is right, and it remains to be proven that there is any truth in Paul's assertion.

Ecclesiastes vii:20 says: "For there is not a just man upon the earth, that doeth good and sinneth not." The inspired Solomon wrote that; yet John contradicts Solomon, the wisest man, when he says: "Whatsoever is born of God doth not commit sin. He that committeth sin is of the devil." And then John 1-8 says: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." Now it is up to the Reconcilers to determine whether Solomon or John is telling the truth. Biblical writers are like modern politicians: One makes an inspired assertion and another equally inspired contradicts it and says "You are another." The Annanias Club was as necessary in Bible days as in Presidential campaigns in the United States today. It is a logical conclusion that the "truth is not in one of them"—Solomon or John—and that "one of them is a deceiver."

If we can believe David, the "man after God's own heart," when he says in Psalm 116:11: "All men are liars," Solomon and John must be both on that list, though one may be a bigger one than the other; and from what the Bible says of David, the father of Solomon, he may grasp the palm from both of them. I never had much faith in David's integrity, for the tricks he played on Saul, and because he sneaked around the chimney to watch Bathsheba taking a bath on the roof of the house; and according to the Bible record, between the veracity of David, Solomon and John there is little choice. On the question of truth much leniency should be shown to Solomon.

Max O'Rell says that "All men deceive their wives," and I guess Max knew what he was talking about. As Solomon had one thousand wives, he must of necessity have been a monumental falsifier, for we are all creatures of environment. If a man with one wife deceive her, think of Solomon who had to deceive a **thousand wives**. It does seem to me if I were a man environed by a thousand wives, I would be forced, not only to be a falsifier, but also a highwayman, a pirate, a traitor, a thief, a bushwhacker, **a boxer, and "an undesirable citizen,"** all in one. Solomon was always an interesting character to me, and when I get to writing about him I never know how to "round to." It is a dead certainty that Solomon had an interesting family.

The Bible says plainly that "All men are liars." To my mind it should have read: "Nearly all men and women are liars, with serious doubts about the small contingent not included in the word all." Of course, the one thousand Mrs. Solomons were all



church members, and lived according to Scripture, as women church members do today, and the amount of downright lying—that falsifying women indulge in, proves conclusively that men have not a trust on that business, as David says they have. The Bible told the one thousand ladies of Mr. Solomon's family, "If they would know any thing, they must learn of their husband at home." Think of a thousand women wanting to know a lot of things, and one poor man (even the wisest one on earth) expected to educate them! I can't help having sympathy for Solomon with all his failings. If I had been in his place I would have taken passage in an airship for heaven, where women are not admitted, and rested forevermore in Abraham's bosom. Solomon, though indulging in some inconsistencies, made a name for himself and his departure from matrimonial bliss to heavenly ecstasy was mourned by one thousand weeping widows, who no doubt kept his memory and his grave green.

John x:8 says: "All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers." The inspired John records that Jesus made this assertion when teaching in the temple. This is a very damaging statement to make of all the human beings who lived from Adam to Jesus. This would include, of course, all the priests, prophets and saints, including also the Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus, and as David, the ancestor of Jesus, says "All men are liars," the Bible itself disproves the fall of the perfect Adam, for the Book says the race were all liars, thieves and robbers before Jesus. This trinity has not the slightest resemblance to perfection; so it is in order for the Reconcilers to clear this Bible inconsistency up. We know this is true of the human race since the coming of Jesus, both from history and actual conditions in Christendom. To the Bible trinity of liars, thieves and robbers can be added, murderers. The armies of the Christian world are like crouched lions, ready at any moment to spring upon their prey, while the masses are the helpless victims of popes, prelates, presidents and pot-house politicians. On the eve of battle the parson prays thus—

Great God, whose almighty breath  
Smote the Assyrian hosts with death,  
Who was with David when he sped  
His pebble at Goliath's head;  
O! make us strong, because we fight  
In the great power of Thy might.  
Guide thou our bullets straight and true,  
As that small stone which David threw;  
Be with Thy people now as then,  
For Jesus' sake. Amen! Amen!

It is up to the Reconcilers to reconcile the characters and customs of the people of God, in their social, commercial and governmental systems, with humane principles, truth, justice and honesty, and to reconcile the claim that Christianity with the religion of a so-called "Prince of Peace", who says in Matthew x:34: "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword."

Matthew x:35: "I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law."

Luke xiv:26: "If any man come to me and hate not his father, and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." How does all this agree with the saying of Jesus: "I come to bring peace on earth and good will to men?"

Two thousand years have rolled away since it is claimed this "Prince of Peace" was on this earth; yet millions have been murdered in the name of His religion. The worst tyranny that has ever cursed the race has been committed in the name of the "Prince of Peace." Matthew x:34-35 is a perfect picture of

Christian civilization today. Marital, family, church and state dissensions are the order of the day—the rule rather than the exception. The Catholic priest hates the Protestant preacher, and each look on the other with contempt, as false teachers deceiving the people. The sons who are at variance with fathers, and the daughters who are at variance with mothers, fill the pews of Christian churches. If a man or woman can be found who has not questioned the wisdom of the selection of a wife or husband, or never regretted the alliance, they should be put in the "museum for a show." And the families who truly love their sons-in-law and daughters-in-law should be given through tickets to the New Jerusalem, and there will be no fear of them being crowded when they get there. Yet it is proclaimed that Christianity is a religion of Love, and its "God is love." It is in order now for the clerical reconcilers to prove the Love of God to poor, suffering Italy. Dr. Lyman Abbott, the eminent preacher, is quoted as using these comforting words regarding the Italian earthquake: "While I hear the shrieks of the dying, the roar of the earthquake, and the rush of the tidal wave, I open my Bible and read that God is our refuge and our strength, a very present help in the time of trouble." Dr. Abbott, with true, Bible consistency, forgets that the folks in Messina and the earthquake districts did not have time to open their Bibles before the Love of God was manifested to them; that their religion (Catholic) forbade them reading the Bible, and if they had had both time and Bibles they could not read, at least the majority of them. If Dr. Abbott had been in the earthquake in Italy, he would have made tracks for anywhere to save himself from his "God of Love." Hunting Bible texts midst the crush of the world and the roar of waters, would have been his last thought. Saving himself would have been his only thought and aim, and unless in the interest of truth, Dr. Abbott retracts what he says he would have done if he had been in the earthquake, he should serve as President of the Annanias Club. Honor bright, Dr. Abbott, would you have tried to save your bacon or your Bible in that earthquake? Now, right now, is a good time to reconcile John iv:19, "God is love," with Jeremiah xlii:14, "I will not pity, nor have mercy, but destroy them," and with Deuteronomy iv:24, "The Lord thy God is a consuming fire."

The first and second chapters of Genesis are now accepted by millions of Christians as mere myth and legend.

The six days of creation is now known as six long creative periods or aeons. If this is so, what becomes of the Holy Sabbath? If human beings are to rest only at the end of every six aeons, no wonder the manufactured machine is running the human machine out of the market. If this be so, the Holy Sabbath, with its Sunday-schools, sermons, churches and collections, is an imposition on Christians, and a contradiction of the Bible statement that "the age of Methuselah was 969 years," and that he "had died a few years after the flood."

If that is true, where was Methuselah during the flood?

He was not in the ark. He may have been an expert swimmer, or he may have waded out. The Bible is silent on this point.

Every line of literature by Christian authorities is apologetic. There never was a time when the truth of the Christian religion was regarded as self-evident. So great an apologist as Cardinal Newman emphasizes the fact that "intellectually, Christianity is not even defensible, and the use of reason naturally engenders unbelief." The whole system has to be constantly propped up by sermons and defensive works, and all this because the inconsistencies, contradictions and impossibilities in the Holy Bible cannot be accepted by reason and common sense.

It is an axiom that Christianity stands or falls with Christ. The American Republic has today a President whose religion denies the divinity of Christ, and to the greatest scholars of our time the history of Jesus Christ, the man, is highly problematical or entirely rejected. Suppose that Jesus was the only

begotten son of God, what becomes of the Bible text, John xii:32: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself?" The Bible says that Jesus was lifted up 2,000 years ago, and yet not one-tenth of the human beings who have been on the earth since then have ever heard of him, and a majority who have, do not believe in him. What is the use of having the Son of God as the world's Savior if he does not save, and has failed to keep his word?

All the explanations of the clerics of all ages have dismally failed to reconcile the absurdities and impossibilities printed in the Bible. The intellectual world today rejects the story of creation, and Science has proved it to a myth. This foundation stone of the system being dislodged, the superstructure—the fall of man

—the rib-woman—the Virgin birth, and the Resurrection are tottering, and will soon be a mass of ruins, a theological scrap-heap. Nothing can save the Christian system but absolute proof that woman was made from Adam's rib; that the father of Jesus was a ghost, and that Jesus arose from the dead. When it is proven that human beings have immortal souls, and a heaven of happiness awaits the faithful, the whole human race will enter into the port of safety without the aid of priest or preacher.

Mark ix:24 says: "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." This is the brand of belief in both pew and pulpit today, and Bible inconsistencies are the cause of this state of the religious world.

Versailles, Kentucky.

## MAN'S ORIGIN AND DESTINY

WHAT IS PROPERTY?—MEN AND ANIMALS BOTH HAVE  
PROPERTY.—MONEY.—LABOR.—NECESSITIES  
AND LUXURIES.—BALANCE CANNOT  
BE MAINTAINED.

(By Dr. A. Hausman.)

PROPERTY. It seems hardly necessary to say anything about the meaning of property, but considering that such foolish definitions as "Property is theft," still find believers, it may not be amiss to repeat here that property is the product of labor. Animals have property; bees have their hives; ants their hills, birds their nests. The property of persons may consist in the natural articles, or money, which represents all values.

Considering the great importance of money, it is not surprising that it is the object of human desire,—the idol against which even the Christian god has to take a back seat, in spite of all the protestations of the believers, who profess to despise the contemptible mammon, but cannot do without it. Instead of hypocritically feigning indifference against the "filthy lucre", they might as well admit the truth that money, next to health, is indeed the most valuable possession on earth; it represents everything that human ingenuity has invented to contribute to happiness and make life worth living.

Apostles of the millenium have frequently denounced the unequal distribution of money as unjust and against the intention of god, but whenever an attempt was made to run society on the principle of equality, it proved a dismal failure. There is no equality in this world, notwithstanding the Declaration of Independence, which says: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." The latter part of this passage is quite correct, but the first one is a mistake. The truth is, that no two men are born alike; they differ in physical and mental capacity, and their inalienable rights would not help them much if they happened to be

born in Russia or any other despotic country. It is self-evident that unequal causes must produce unequal effects. Different abilities of individuals must necessarily be followed by different results of their labor; one will gain more money than the other, and the use they make of it will vary according to their tastes and dispositions. We encounter here the same original biological principles which we found throughout the animal kingdom: the law of variation and adaptation in the struggle of existence and the survival of the fittest as the result.

As the most important biological law, which has the greatest effect upon the transformation of species, we found the law of inheritance; it applies as well to a community as to a single individual. A community (or nation) inherits institutions, as government, standing army, law, religion, etc., and also technical and scientific accomplishments. A single individual enters this world naked and helpless, the only point in which all men are equal, but endowed with various natural gifts, physical and mental faculties, which constitute useful or injurious qualities in the struggle of existence. But not only are physical and mental traits or talents transmitted from the parents to the child, which alone must lead to different results in life, but this inequality is heightened by another factor,—the inheritance of property. We see this same law in operation among the animals; bees may inhabit for generations the same hive, and leave always a supply of food for their progeny. The complicated conditions of human culture make it possible for man to leave property in various shapes, or in money, which is identical with all values. To the social principles enumerated above we must therefore add another, which reads: No two persons are born alike, and no equality can obtain in earthly possessions. Nor is equality essential or indispensable for happiness.

In view of the physical laws we must abandon all idealistic hopes for absolute liberty, fraternity and equality in this world, and assign them to the realm of dreams.

Defining the term, "fittest to survive," great stress was laid upon the fact that no moral significance whatever at-



taches to it. Money represents material value at all times and at all places, but does not imply the necessity of personal merits of the owner. A person inheriting a fortune has certainly done nothing to deserve it; has not given society any equivalent in return, but this does not affect the value of his money, because it is absolutely impossible for society to repudiate its obligations to exchange the in itself worthless metal for the real necessities of life. Money is universally acknowledged by all civilized nations; only savages with few wants can dispense with its use, and exchange directly the products of their primitive industry. In dealing with the social question it is of the greatest importance to keep in mind this peculiarity of money, that it retains its power under all conditions, no matter how it may have been obtained. A Roman emperor is credited with saying in regard to an income from a very unsavory source: "Non alet," it does not stink.

**LABOR AND CAPITAL.** As the inevitable result of the unequal distribution of wealth, we find the accumulation of great fortunes on one side and poverty on the other. Socialistic writers frequently treat this natural relation as two different subjects under the name of "Labor and Capital." Knowing the true meaning of money, we must consider it synonymous with labor, and reject this separation as unreasonable and unnatural. They cannot be separated and much less be placed in opposition as two hostile factors of society. Capital is no well defined fixed entity; it runs from one cent upwards. It may be acquired by industry or commerce, in which case society received an equivalent in material value, or by some illegitimate transaction, when society receives no value in return. As long as certain industries can be carried on to greater advantage on a large scale it will remain so. The great technical enterprises of today require a large amount of organized labor and unless they are carried out under the system of co-operative labor or by the State, which is the same on a larger scale, individual pluck and energy must be allowed to reap the profits if they take the risks. Concerning the illegitimate acquisition of capital, that is, accumulation of wealth or money for which society has not received any equivalent in return, and which is a dead loss, there is no other remedy except the abolishment of such institutions which afford an opportunity for obtaining a share of the common wealth without giving any value in return. Such institutions are the government, the standing armies, and the church. The first named could not be dispensed with, but it can be made less burdensome. Standing armies might be reduced to a small contingent adequate to the limited warfare against savages, and no physical necessity exists for the maintenance of the church. It could be abolished entirely as soon as the evolution of reason has made sufficient progress among the masses.

## CHAPTER XI.

### PRODUCTIVE AND UNPRODUCTIVE OCCUPATIONS.—NECESSITIES AND LUXURIES.—IMPOSSIBILITY OF BALANCING PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION.

Notwithstanding the simplicity of the physical laws upon which the complex organization of society is based, they are still little understood, especially by those who are most directly affected, the so-called working classes, that is, those performing manual labor.

It is an absolute axiom that for everybody that does not work himself, somebody else must work; that for every man who does not produce the necessities of life, some one else must do it. And it follows further that the sustenance of all such persons who do not contribute anything to the material wealth of society, is a burden that must be borne by some one.

We distinguish as useless all such occupations which neither contribute to the gratification of a necessity or a luxury of life, and owe their existence to the inheritance of institutions for which there is no longer a physical necessity, but only a moral one, consisting in transient whims and caprices of the people, or the low intellect and brutal instincts of the masses.

As the most expensive and detrimental institution, we must consider the standing armies, which entail an enormous loss for the nations that have to support them. To feed, clothe and shelter several hundred thousand men and furnish the expensive equipment of war, arms, ammunition, etc., requires an enormous amount of labor, for which no reciprocal service is rendered society, and which is no benefit to any one. But, as stated above, there is no nation yet that can afford to be without an army. All that they might possibly attain in this respect in Europe would be the disarming of the civilized nations, who together could force the barbaric nations, Russians and Turks, to do the same. But the bulk of all the nations is still too ignorant and brutal to permit the prediction of such a movement for the near future. The armies required to conquer savages and introduce civilization by force, which is the only way it has ever been introduced, would not be large and no great burden. How ignorant people are in regard to the burden imposed upon them by the maintenance of a large army, is shown by the curious argument which one hears not infrequently, that it helps to bring money among the people. True enough, but where does the money come from? Always from the people, who must perform a certain amount of work to get it back. Exactly so much work as it requires to earn the money that goes to support the army, is lost for the person who pays; he does not receive any benefit from it. Supposing the soldiers were merely fed and clothed, without having any arms or doing any duty, the loss would be less than now, the labor necessary to produce the material of war being saved. But supposing that every person enlisted in the army was devoting his energies to productive labor, what would be the result? The same amount of money would represent a larger quantity of actual value, that is, necessities and luxuries of life. The objection that there was no opportunity for employing the

idle hands is simply absurd, because the population has been steadily increasing and with it the army, showing that there was room for additional numbers. There is no other possibility for the application of human labor and industry but nature. When the extreme limit of productiveness has been reached, further increase will be impossible.

Next to standing armies in regard to costliness and uselessness come the governments. What an enormous burden is the support of so many princely houses in Europe, for which the people do not receive any equivalent in return?—even the onerous duty of governing, making laws and

superintending their execution, being no longer incumbent upon the scions of the ruling families. Changing names does not alter facts,—republican governments are often just as expensive, and even more so. The unwieldy machinery of civil government, the courts of justice, etc., are synonymous with a great loss of labor, and though government cannot be dispensed with, it might be much reduced and simplified, if people would learn to better understand and observe the laws of society, instead of following implicitly their short-sighted egoism.

(To be continued.)

## Ex-Clergymen's Correspondence Bureau

(By A. J. Clausen.)

Since the beginning of my work as National Organizer for the Philosophical Bible Class, I have received letters from a number of clergymen who have turned from the disgraceful business of living by spreading falsehood and fraud. We need their labor and they need our sympathy and respect, and we are abundantly able to render both, as we outnumber all religious, superstitious sects in the United States. But owing to indifference for organization, we are no better to the honest clergymen than a desert would be to him. This is wrong, and a strong reason for clergymen to remain in their churches and spread superstition and falsehood, rather than starve for being honest and telling the truth to the people. It is to the scholarly clergy we are most indebted for much hard work in clearing up the root and foundation of religious mystification.

If we would do our duty as faithfully as do the ignorant and superstitious people, as they see it, clerical frauds would soon come to an end. Just think how many churches there are with but a few families to keep each of them going, while Freethinkers in many places outnumber the church people ten to one; and these very Freethinkers are held up to help support these institutions of superstitions, with which they do not sympathize in the least. If the amount of money paid into the churches by Freethinkers was used to pay for the services of a man who would teach their own doctrines, this country would look different from what it does now, and our Republic would not be threatened with a displacement for a monarchy, as it is now, in the interest of rich plutocrats and a corrupt clergy.

We must wake up and organize. The plutes are determined to displace our Republic for a monarchy, and to suppress education to keep the people in ignorance in order to maintain their power as lords

of the land. The orthodox clergy is heart and hand with them to bring about the same conditions, in order to force the people down upon their knees before them. Meanwhile, the intelligent people are shirking from their duty to counteract by education the criminal work going on to put an end to our republican liberties.

Wake up, friends; wake up, before it is too late! I will do what little I can to serve you by conducting an Ex-Clergymen's Bureau, where ex-clergymen can file their wants and Liberals can file their needs for local lecturers. In this way I hope to be able to bring about a correspondence between the people in need of a local lecturer and the lecturers who are in readiness to serve them. I am depending on the Liberal press of the country to do the advertising free, as I am doing my work free for the good of us all.

St. Ansagar, Iowa.

### EX-CLERGYMEN'S CORRESPONDENCE BUREAU.

Ex-clergymen desiring to correspond with Liberal societies contemplating to engage a local lecturer, can notify this Bureau free of charge.

Liberal societies desiring to correspond with Liberal lecturers with a view to secure one to serve as a local lecturer, can notify this Bureau free of charge.

Always enclose a self-addressed and stamped envelope for a reply.

Prof. A. J. CLAUSEN, Ph. D. M. D.,  
St. Ansagar, Iowa.

### REFLECTIONS ON THE DEBATE.

Blade Writer Gives Expression of His  
Opinion Concerning the Journey  
and Its Results.

(By Warren S. Dean.)

It was gratifying to me as a lover of

reason and truth, to learn from the pen of our Editor, and the proceedings of his debate at Canal Dover, Ohio, between himself and the Rev. L. S. Keyser; specially so that part where the Rev. Doctor lost his temper and was hissed by the audience. But what a contrast there must have been between those debaters,—one putting truth and reason forward in regard to Lincoln's Freethought views, and being hissed by the audience; he coming back with proof to substantiate his assertions, and challenged a repetition,—while the Rev. Doctor acknowledged his error, and admitting he had done wrong.

Also, note the marked contrast in the preparation of that debate: The Freethought advocate simply bringing his intelligent, individualist views forward, that was based on nature's laws, man's brain and handiwork; while the orthodox shepherd's preparations consisted in giving a month's revival (drunk from the dregs of superstition) to their flocks for the purpose of blind-folding the mental faculties of any and all, to keep them from discovering the true merits in the remarks of the advocate of Freethought.

It does not seem possible that any part of an audience that "professes" to be "intelligent" would allow their mental faculties to become so blunted as to blind them to the absurdities and contradictions that ancient traditions (ignorance) impose on their minds. Many of them seem unable to discover the gross contrast between the so-called holy history on the one hand, and plant life and many useful and beautiful things for human needs, which many of them are engaged in training, jointly with the forces and laws of nature, on the other hand; and they seem almost unable to discover or realize the marked contrast between the professed piety and goodness of orthodox priesthood pretensions, and their known acts of past and present times.

And last, what a marked contrast between that class of people who spend one day in seven in prayers and slavish supplications to an unknown being, while during the other six days they are in numerous ways welding their schemes on any and



all things, to hold and extend their power to enslave the human mind. While on the other hand, the great body of people who are trying in their numerous ways to give and do something to better conditions and make more happiness in this life's work; who realize whatever good and useful production comes to them, comes solely through the works of nature and the intelligent efforts of the brain and hand of useful human endeavor. What a great pity it is that the great body of people could not know and distinguish not only the marked contrast between two debaters on the platform, but also to that far greater question: Who and what party is upholding ignorance, delusions and falsehoods of old? And give them to understand they will be justly despised by those who are, or wish to be mentally honest, by making them prove their assertions by the true standards of the KNOWN experience in this world's life.

Delhi, N. Y.

#### WHAT IS A FREETHINKER?

Discussion upon Remarks of J. Frantz, which Appeared in Blade Columns.

(By A. E. Wade.)

I thought when I commenced to correspond with professed Freethinkers through the press and otherwise, that I had found a people who were not sectarian or bigoted, and who were open to conviction whenever the truth was made plain to their understanding. I am moved to write this by an article in the last issue of the Blade, by J. Frantz, in reply to John Maddock, on the Materialist attitudes. I leave Brother Maddock to reply to the justice of excluding him from the organization, as he may; I only intend to give him a few facts, presuming, of course, that he "has sense enough to distinguish between a fact and a fable."

First: Is it not a fact that Abraham Lincoln, our martyr President, frequently resorted to a noted Spiritualist for counsel and advice, when he was about to issue his famous Emancipation Proclamation? A full account of the whole proceeding may be found in a book published by Mrs. Nettie Colburn Maynard in 1891, under the title, "Was Abraham Lincoln a Spiritualist?" The genuineness of her testimony is verified by Mark Pomeroy, Francis B. Carpenter, E. D. N. Southworth and Simon P. Chase. Again, Bro. Frantz has no doubt read of Joan of Arc, who "heard voices," and was thereby led to take command of the French army, and as long as she was obedient to these voices, she led the army on to victory and crowned their King. Is not this a matter of history, or is it a "fable?"

We read a very interesting book, not long ago written by Helen Bingham, entitled "The Irish Saint." The book is said to be an authentic account of a poor, little illiterate Irish girl, who could neither read nor write, and who heard voices telling her what to do in nearly every affair of life. The boys called her "Holy Ann," because she always addressed this unseen being as her "Father." When they would lose anything they would always go to Ann and ask her to get it. She would go to her room and "walk up to a corner with her eyes closed, and in her simple way she would say, 'Father, where is it?' and after standing a moment or two in silence, she would turn around and go directly to the spot where the article was."

Mrs. Baker G. Eddy, the founder of the Christian Science sect, also heard voices calling her name, according to her biographer, and she retired from the busy world for a space of three years for meditation and "spirit illumination," when she wrote her book, "Health and Science and Key to the Scriptures." Now it is a fact, as much so as any sworn testimony in court, that hundreds of persons have been healed of "all manner of diseases" by simply reading that book.

Doubtless, Bro. Frantz is well versed in all the material sciences, such as Astronomy, Geology, etc., but knows nothing about Christian Science, or Spiritualism, hence he is all "one sided" in his knowledge of the universe. My object in belonging to the Freethinkers is to reason on these questions, in order that we may ascertain all the facts and so be able to come to a correct "knowledge of the truth" in the matter.

The greatest obstacle in the way of progress is these narrow sectarian parties that claim that they "know the truth" and nobody can teach them anything. Of such "churches or "associations," be they orthodox or heterodox, Spiritualist or Materialist, I have no use, if they will not allow me to proclaim what I believe are the facts or the truth.

Urbana, Ill.

#### BIBLE LESSON.—WISE OR OTHERWISE.

(By The Chaplain.)

When the world was young and ignorant  
a little Jewish maid,  
Espoused to one named Joseph, a carpenter by trade,  
Got full of pure religion and, running somewhat wild,  
Met a holy ghost one night,—the consequence a child.

The liason of Mary and the ghost was never known

Till she really couldn't help it,—'twas very plainly shown;  
And then her lover Joseph, got rattled in his mind,  
And thought he'd fire Mary—leave her far behind.

But Joseph was religious, believed in fairy dreams;  
So when the angel of the Lord appeared in sleeping scenes  
And told him 'twas a holy ghost that came from heaven above,  
He woke to find his troubled brains were once more filled with love.

#### MORAL:

Should your Sunday girl get busy, as dear Mary did of yore,  
Don't get your gun to working to settle such a score;  
Strange things might once more happen in the flight of Father Time—  
Your girl might be a virgin, and her kid be called divine.  
San Francisco, Calif.

#### TIME.

(By Julia C. Coon.)

Roll on, O Time, with steady sweep, roll on;  
The ages rear a record to thy hand.  
The earth, once young and with her virtue crowned,  
Now shows thy heavy mark.  
Before thy scythes have forests bent, while on their track  
The grain fields wave afar.  
Rivers have come, have gone, have come again,  
And e'en the rocks cry to us of thy weight.  
Roll on, O Time, you only hold our hope.  
'Tis you alone can right dull Error's sway,  
And shrivel, like the leaves, dark Falsehood's power.  
Roll on, O Time, along the centuries, roll,  
'Tis you shall place mankind on his estate.

Roll on, O struggling human tide, roll on;  
Thy hopes, thy aims make up the sum of life.  
Thy briny tears have made the ocean salt.  
And is there one among the multitude  
But sells his birthright for a mess of pottage?  
But barter truth and peace, yea life itself,  
For shallow myths and hope of other worlds?  
But kneels in dust to gods and "holy writ."  
And knows not Reason's power?  
Victims of priest and pope, men cringe—  
Weaklings who never try their strength.  
Roll on, O human tide, the doom of ages  
Must pass away, and yield to truth her throne.  
Bartow, Fla.

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## GIBBONS ON SCIENCE AND RELIGION.

Cardinal Gibbons has been interviewed to the extent of over a column, and the secular press has made a rush for his fulminations. When a man of god speaks, he is supposed to speak with authority, but in this instance certain elements appear which suggest that it was the glory of the church, the enhancement of the privilege and power of its priesthood, and not the happiness and liberty of the common people, that induced the Cardinal to take his pen in hand, or rattle off a dictation to his typewriter.

But in any event, Cardinal Gibbons has spoken. He does not shower upon the breast the gleaned wealth of antiquity, nor attempt to "unsphere the spirit of Plato," but he essays the role of a moral and social censor, unmindful of the fact that the great body of the American people give little or no heed to the decrees of the church. The object and purpose of the interview was to ascertain from him an expression as to how far the modern isms had penetrated the Roman hierarchy, and their effects upon the Roman Catholic congregations. The Cardinal asserts that these have had no visible effect upon any department of his church. And yet, the very fact that a necessity was felt for an interview upon such a subject, and the very fact that the Cardinal talked, indicates that such a possibility exists, and while the Romish church may withstand the spirit of liberality and progress longer and more suc-

cessfully than its Protestant offshoots, yet the church that will not progress, keep up with the spirit of the age, must perish, and this will be the fate of all who stand in the way.

"The church fosters and encourages every department of science; but just because she is the friend of true science, she is opposed to all false pretensions of science. There is as much difference between true and false science as there is between authority and despotism, liberty and license."

So declares Cardinal Gibbons in his interview. And since when has the Catholic Church become the friend of Science? Since when has the Catholic Church fostered and encouraged Science? When Science was in its infancy, still in its swaddling clothes, did the Catholic Church foster and encourage the babe? If so, how? By burning with green wood, and by torturing those who did foster, encourage and teach it? The crowning glory of Science came in the century last past, when it demonstrated the indestructibility of matter, and for this the Church has never forgiven Science, because it took its personal god out of the universe and established the law of cause and effect as against special creation. Neither Cardinal Gibbons, or his church, would foster and encourage any department of science, unless it could be shown that by so doing the church would derive material aid and benefit therefrom. The Cardinal even goes so far as to admit this when he said, further:

"When she (the church) hears a man or woman advancing some crude theory at variance with the received doctrines of revelation,—with the existence of God, for example, or his superintending providence, etc., \* \* \* she knows that his or her assumptions must be false because she knows that God's revelation must be true."

Here may we see the dogmatism of the church personified. Place before a man like Cardinal Gibbons, any fact, no matter how certain may be its demonstration, and if it is in the slightest conflict with his ideas of revelation, he will ignore the fact, refuse to receive it, and still refuse to critically examine his alleged revelation. But what revelation has any god made? And to whom revealed? Surely it will not be contended that the book called the Bible contains the sum and substance of a god's revelation to man, portraying the plans and concepts of the infinite! True and false in Science! Aye, just as there be the true and the false in all things, even in the churches of all denominations. The true science is to be found outside of and independent of the church. The false exists only where the church permits. For centuries the church has been teaching a false science, and it is still teaching it until this day. It has been and is now the policy and purpose of the church to so contort science as to make it fit, as far as that be possible, with the teachings of the church concerning god's power and revelation. Recognizing the forces of scientific thought, the church at first opposed. Repeated victories brought the church to its senses, and with unwilling heart it accepted as much as it dare and only that which would enable it to maintain its orthodox



pretensions intact, and yet appear before the world as being liberal in its attitude towards science. The church still prays for rain when it knows that prayer will not produce rain. That is unscientific. It may fit with revelation, but it does not fit in with science. The church prays for power, and yet it knows that power can alone be obtained by and through the number of its adherents. The church sells indulgences and grants dispensations, well knowing that it is committing a larceny upon the pockets of the people.

The Cardinal proceeds to expound the attitude of the church, of the gospels and of Paul concerning women, alleging that these regarded her and taught that she was the "peer of man in origin and destiny" and in "redemption by the blood of Christ." This is fine talk, my Cardinal, but the one trouble with it is, that it is not true. The bible does not give to woman the same origin as man. Neither is she made the peer of man by the gospels or by Paul. We are somewhat afraid that it has been so long since the Cardinal has read his bible that he has actually forgotten what it does say. But when he denounces divorce, and terms all divorcees who marry again, as "polygamists and bigamists," he is bringing himself in conflict with "revelation," which he started out to defend. The Old Testament, by implication, restricts the possession of one wife only to the Bishops of the church. Every Free-thinker can tell the Cardinal what Paul taught about women, how she must ask her husband if she wants to know anything, and to be and remain subject to their husbands in all things. As a matter of fact, Paul places man as far above woman as Christ is said to be above man, and if the Cardinal thinks this is being the "peer" of man, he is far from understanding the meaning of the term.

The church is fixed in its mentality. All science is progressive. The intellectual attitude of church members is determined *for* them, not *by* them. The man of science changes his concepts at will, always and ever guided by physical facts. The senses of man stand between him and natural phenomena. They stand between him and the external world, and the world of thought. He takes his facts from Nature and transfers them bodily to the domain of the mind. He looks at them, compares them, observes their mutual relations and connections, ever bringing them clearer before his mental eye until he is able to settle upon the cause which unites them. This is Science. On the other hand, the church insists upon a formula of belief from which there is no escape, no alternative. This is religion. Science and religion are opposite. Religion has never aided Science, and Science can give no aid to religion.

#### INVENTION AND GOD.

Orthodox ideals are being shattered on every hand by the unimpassioned and independent assaults of science and education. The rainbow is no longer believed in as a sign of promise, for men know that the rainbow has appeared upon the sky ever since the sun's light rays were deflected

through water prisms in the atmosphere. Not one bible believer in ten really accepts the orthodox version of the origin of the rainbow. And yet this portion of the bible text must be as much inspired as any other portion, no more and no less.

The first great invention was a bow and arrow. The next was the invention of fire. God had absolutely nothing to do with either. With a bow and arrow the first important weapon of offense and defense, man became in reality master over the beasts of the field. Before this, man was but a beast himself, little removed from brute domain, and frequently engaged in a contest with other beasts for the exercise of some personal right. The bow and arrow gave him power, almost at will, to bring the birds of the air at his feet, to subdue by death the most powerful and most dreaded of all his four-footed compeers. Not until this moment did man actually become "lord of creation," but he was still a beast. He still ate raw flesh and raw roots. His diet was much like that of other beasts, biped and quadruped. He was now able to conquer them, but he was not far above them. There lurked within him, however, the possibilities of more speedy development, waiting an opportunity. Step by step the change. The process was slow and painful. The history of the development and growth has been written only in blood with the pen of the suffering. Each successive organism climbed higher only by standing upon the corpse of its weaker brother. This is natural history.

Now came the invention of fire, and at one mighty bound man leaped from his humble surroundings to the pinnacle of success. He could now cook his food and he no longer ate it raw. A line was drawn between man and the brute. Across that line no brute has ventured, and man had taken the first great step toward civilization. Still god had naught to do with human affairs. It was the result of human effort alone. From that day, innumerable inventions and discoveries have been made, but at no stage does the hand of any god become visible.

Then let it be asked: Of what use or benefit is god to man? Why should man be asked to worship him, pay him homage, when he has done nothing for man? The facts in development reveal a glorious history of man's upward growth. The doctrine of special creation as taught by Christian theology, suggest a miserable failure, a fiasco invented and designed by deity. It were charitable indeed, to say of any deity, that Christian teachings are not true, a libel on the character and intelligence of the deity they worship. Man's progress, being unaided of god, man can well afford to continue to ignore god in all undertakings. Convince intelligent men and women of this fact, and the occupation of hired preachers will disappear. They are as useless as barnacles on the hull of a ship. They are as necessary as mosquitoes and of about equal value to humanity. Their mission is to teach a lie against nature, to suppress truth, to distort fact, and try to force an acceptance of themselves as accredited representatives of a god that does not and cannot exist.

There is no god, but ignorance still trembles at the sound of a meaningless and empty word.

There is no god, and priests, preachers and politicians combine to propagate a myth for personal profit.

There is no god, and the race will be happier when the knowledge and a proper understanding of that fact becomes more universal.

God is a mere invention, born of ignorance.

#### TO COMMUNICATE WITH MARS.

During the month of July, this year, the planet Mars will be nearer to the earth by about five millions of miles than it has ever been before, or is likely to be again, and this approaching proximity of the ruddy planet is moving the students of astronomy to a serious and painstaking attempt at communication with its inhabitants, if the planet really be inhabited by sentient beings.

Last year the Blade published a number of articles pro and con upon the subject of Mars, and the discussion afforded some interesting reading. The writers differed in their opinions concerning the habitability of our solar neighbor, its capabilities of sustaining sentient life, and all gave good reasons for the theories advanced. However that may be, if it is possible to properly conduct the experiments proposed, some interesting scientific data may be adduced. No one interested in such matters, can question, or entertain the slightest doubt, concerning the importance of such an undertaking, and it is to be hoped that an opportunity will be given to try it.

Several leading astronomers have suggested from time to time, different means and methods of trying to communicate with Mars. Camille Flammarion, the French theorizer, has written upon the subject, and that staid astronomer, Sir Robert Ball, discussed it seriously enough to point out many of the difficulties that would be encountered. Ever since Schiaparelli discovered the channels, or canals, upon the surface of Mars, we have made rapid and great progress in learning more facts about our celestial neighbor.

Prof. Edward C. Pickering, of Harvard University, suggests a series of heliographic signalling through stellar space, by means of giant revolving mirrors, and he estimates the cost of the experiment at \$10,000,000. Even if the results of the effort were to spell failure, yet it would not altogether be a waste of money, for the experiments would certainly disclose something new. It would mean that a step had been actually taken in an effort to communicate with Mars, or her people, if she have any, and were a message of some sort to be flashed back to earth, the triumph of science would be made complete and a permanent conquest of superstition would be afforded.

The proposed plan is to arrange a series of mirrors so as to present a single reflecting surface towards the planet. These mirrors are to be attached to one great axis set parallel to the axis of the earth; to run the mirrors by means of a motor, and so timed as to make one complete revolution

every twenty-four hours. In order to reflect a sufficient quantity of light to attract the attention of any people on Mars, these mirrors would have to be set over an area of a quarter of a mile, and even then, assuming the existence of people on Mars to see the signal, it could not be seen with the naked eye; hence, this experiment must presuppose that the Martians are in possession of some mechanical contrivance, similar to our telescopes, to bring distant objects within the radius of vision. This would present the appearance of a small point of light on the surface of the earth, and by using a series of dots and dashes, or some other characters, furnishing a change from one to the other, it would attract the attention of the Martians, and lead to an answering signal of some sort. If such an answer could be received it would soon become an easy matter to establish a code for transmitting messages.

With the rapid advances now being made in wireless telegraphy, there comes the possibility, remote it may be, that some time in the future, if it be successfully proven that Mars is inhabited, a more specific means of communication may be established, and a friendly conversation with the Martian people indulged in. That Mars has an atmosphere capable of sustaining life, is not questioned. It is also known that it enjoys a mild and equable climate. It is also admitted that it supports vegetation. There is no doubt but what abundant water exists upon its surface. Under such conditions, it is not improbable, or impossible, that sentient life may also exist upon its surface. Many astronomers believe this. Percival Lowell, of Boston, has devoted his life and his fortune to investigating this planet. He has built an extensive observatory at Flagstaff, Arizona, from which he has patiently studied it. He expresses the firm belief that Mars is inhabited, and Prof. Pickering, who now wishes to undertake this experiment of signalling agrees with him. Prof. Hough insists that Mars is not only inhabited by a race of people similar to ourselves, but that they are one million years advanced beyond us in intelligence.

But let us suppose that communication be established with Mars and unquestioned proof secured of its habitation, what is to become of the Christian scheme of salvation, and its atonement of blood? It will prove a serious blow to bible cosmogony. Modern interpretations of the Genesis creation will have to undergo reconstruction in order to conform with the newly discovered truths. We could also anticipate what would happen to Jehovah, for here would be a people of which he had absolutely no knowledge. Ethnologists have discovered whole races and types of men of which the bible makes no mention, and if god, when inspiring his bible writers, overlooked these, it could not be expected that he was aware of any people living on Mars. Put the people of earth in communication with the people of Mars, and there will be considerable wriggling in the Christian pulpits. The Martians may have another story concerning these things, but it is too far fetched a theory to assume that they would have the same god myths, and the



same story of a crucified savior. It may be that the Martians never got that bad as to need a redeemer. It may be that god, if there is one, made them of different clay, in a different mold. But come what will, if the experiment is attempted, it is bound to prove disastrous to Christian theology.

EDITORIAL POTPOURI.

With this issue we commence the eighteenth volume of the Blade, and we hope to stick to it for another eighteen volumes, or more.

\* \* \*

Parker H. Sercombe, editor of Tomorrow, is now on a lecturing tour in the east.

\* \* \*

In the advocacy of the principles of Freethought there must be no falling back. Duty demands that we press onward and forward. The cohorts of senseless superstition still exercise a devilish power over some of the people.

\* \* \*

Keep the Paine Centennial in your mind's eye. The date is drawing near and those in charge of the program will need all the help they can get to make it a success.

\* \* \*

By a careful study of Judge Ladd's article in our last issue we may be able to realize the necessity of an elongated purse to meet the enormous cost of government in America.

\* \* \*

Under sectarian rivalry one-half of orthodox believers inherit theological prejudices which they do not understand and the other half are made the dupes of mountebanks and charlatans, falling into every ditch which a foolish superstition digs for their feet

\* \* \*

The great majority of men in all highly civilized countries have small regard for the church; they take no thought of her doctrines, and give small heed to her petitions; they seek truth in science rather than in revelation, and the church, in her senile ignorance, fails to realize how stupendous this army is getting to be, and the effect it will produce on all religious organizations.

\* \* \*

Christians point the finger at Doubting Thomas, but it was evidence for truth he sought, and the world would be made still wiser and better did we have more to follow his example instead of blindly following the gonfalon of theological quacks.

\* \* \*

The soul of Joe Petrosino, the New York detective, who was assassinated at Palermo, Italy, by supposed members of the Black Hand, is now expected to rest in peace. At a cost of \$450, a candle has been made for him, which is to be placed in the Roman Catholic cathedral in New York, and allowed to burn itself out. The candle is nine feet high, and is three feet six inches in circumference. It weighs 178 pounds, and is embossed with 14 karat gold.

It is estimated that by burning continuously night and day it will last nearly five years. Poor fools! One century hence the world will know not that Joe Petrosino ever lived, and the candle will be forgot long before that.

\* \* \*

Preachers advocate religion for what there is in it, and the credulous support it because they refuse to think.

\* \* \*

"There are seven thousand students in the colleges of California, and there is not enough religion in the whole to save a rat, if a rat was a subject of salvation." This is not our statement, gentle reader, but a statement made by Rev. W. E. Vaughn, of the Golden State, while addressing a convocation of Methodist Episcopal ministers, recently, at Atlanta, Georgia. We sincerely hope it is true, for it means a great deal more to posterity than appears on the surface. Education destroys religion. This preacher, however, used the statement as an argument in favor of more strenuous work along religious lines for the benefit of his profession. It is doubtless distressing to the clergy to see such an army of educated young men slipping from their clutches.

\* \* \*

Prof. Paul Haupt, author of the Polychromic Bible, and Dean of the Oriental Languages at the John Hopkins University, in a recent address before the American Oriental Society, of New York, denied that the Red Sea ever parted to permit the Israelites out of Egypt; denied that Lot's wife was turned to a pillar of salt, and denied that Moses, or any other man, ever talked to god. Al though professing to remain a Christian, Prof. Haupt is treading upon dangerous ground. As an oriental scholar, the professor knows the origin of many of the bible tales, and his familiarity with natural phenomena, his knowledge of Egyptian topography, together with the derivation of Hebrew names, impels his unbelief. In Christian eyes this is no great crime, but the criminality consists in giving expression to the unbelief and the reasons for it.

\* \* \*

The true history of Freethought forms a large proportion of all we can know and enjoy of civil and religious liberty. Its principles are such as have always attracted the loftiest minds and boldest characters. In its organizations, Freethought has refused to make any compromise with sacerdotalism along the lines of conscience. Her defenders could not be deflected from the path of duty and honor by the frown of authority or the blandishments of corruption. The path of its advocates has led oftener into exile than into favor, oftener to the dungeon and the stake than to public receptions. Under its searching gaze the shackles have fallen from the human mind and divine rights have shrunk to the mean things they now appear. Wherever a battle was to be fought for human liberty, a forlorn hope to be led, or a mine braved for conscience sake, or when the blood of martyrdom was needed as a testimony to truth, her advocates have furnished them.

...Our next issue will contain another splendid article from the pen of Mrs. Josephine K. Henry, on bible literature. As a writer and a critic, Mrs. Henry has few equals, and the readers of the Blade are fortunate indeed to have an opportunity of reading after her.

\* \* \*

In some instances the world may appear to be a cruel mother to her most deserving children. Those who court the many-headed monster, who filter its rank breath, and to its idolatries bow the patient knee, may materially prosper for a season, but sooner or later it will trample them beneath its brutal heel. But those who take duty for their guiding star and are strong enough to withstand the gibes of malice and the jeers of ignorance, will find that the years are seldom unjust.

Tomorrow Magazine has made its appearance in a new form, approaching closely to the size and style of the Blade pages. The last issue is for January, February and March, thereby enabling its publishers to bring it up to date. It contains an abundance of good reading matter from the pen of Sercombe, himself, and its regular contributors. Tomorrow has just completed the fourth year of its existence, and the Blade wishes for it a greater success in the years to come.

Parker Sercombe, editor of Tomorrow, who has been devoting himself to the production of his announced book, advises the Blade that his work is now on the press and will shortly be ready for delivery. From the sample copy of the pages submitted we bespeak for it a cordial reception, and our readers are referred to the quotation therefrom which appears on another page as showing the trend and character of this latest literary effort of the Chicago philosopher.

\* \* \*

Ancient custom and belief are rapidly hastening toward their final setting and the world now knows that there is no hideous devil who makes it a business to bargain for human souls, neither is there a god with whom such a devil could drive a trade.

\* \* \*

Ever since boys began to be and they were able to read from printed types, the youthful mind, filled with the love of adventure and deeds of daring, has turned to novels of a daring character. This demand naturally brought on a goodly supply, and who has not watched a boy standing at the window of some book-store eagerly devouring the front pages of dime novels! Well, now comes Mrs. E. C. Knapp, a well-known Sunday-school worker, of Detroit, Michigan, who urges the boys to turn their backs upon "Diamond Dick" and "Roaring Pete," and to read the bible, which she declares is "teeming with deeds and events every bit as exciting as the ingeniously concocted adventures of the nickel novel hero." Mrs. Knapp is

partly right, but it is very evident that she has momentarily lost sight of the fact that there are grossly immoral "deeds and events" in the bible, far worse than any nickel novel contains. Bible tales satisfied the minds of the people of the age wherein they were written. As humanity progressed they discarded bibles for matters of higher moment, just as the boy drops his light literature as manhood's day draws nigh. In our judgment the bible is too indecent to be made a substitute for the yellow novel.

\* \* \*

The people are ever drifting further from the fanciful tales of bible lore, and the pulpits are getting into the procession. Belief without evidence is the demand of faith, but no man can believe that which does not receive the sanction of his reason. Man is no more responsible for what he believes or disbelieves than he is for the time and place of his birth. He may succeed in deceiving the world with a false profession of faith, but he cannot deceive himself. The mind of even the worst man is a court in which every cause is tried with rigid impartiality. He may not announce his true finding, but he knows what it is himself. Therefore, it is not only honesty in thought, but honesty in expression that must obtain. Men doubt when the evidence is unsatisfactory or the mind incapable of analyzing it. No sacred book, so-called, ever yet convinced any man that there was any greater being in the universe than himself.

\* \* \*

The Blade is pleased to announce that it has appointed an English representative to solicit subscriptions and promote its interests in Great Britain. Our agent is P. Gill, 123 Vicarage Road, Wolverhampton, England, to whom the proper commission has been sent.

\* \* \*

Our bound volume of the Blade for 1908 is now in the hands of its subscribers. The delay caused by running short of copies will not occur again, as this experience has caused us to take extra precautions against such a contingency with the 1909 volume.

\* \* \*

During the absence of M. Mangasarian in Europe, his platform will be occupied by Fra Elbertus, John Emerson Roberts, of Kansas City; Henry Frank, of New York, and the Blade's editor. Although the order of appearance for each has not yet been made known to the Editor, he has requested the last Sunday in May, owing to the absence of his wife with a sick mother in Kansas. When the date has been agreed upon, due announcement will be made in the Blade columns, and the Editor will be pleased to meet once more the friends of a generation ago, and new ones acquired since.



## PAGE FROM ORIGINAL BLADE'S POETS

## DEATH OF BRUNO.

(By Joseph Rogers.)

(Alone upon the deck of a ship of Martyrdom, Bruno meets the enemy's boarders with a pistol and cutlass in his hands.)

"Go back, ye foes," he cried, "Ye shall not jeer

The moan that beckons death to claim its own;

The orphan's sob, the stricken mother's tear,

That rise to cloud the sun of morrow's dawn,

These bloody decks and tatter'd flag reverse.

"Tis well ye halt to hear, for one yet stands

To save my country's flag and guard the dead

From senseless foes whose red and tainted hands

Would o'er the death of heroes try to spread

The rag that fills with woe so many lands.

"Be patient yet awhile! Your captain's heart

Is cover'd by a gun that never fails,  
And cross this space a leaden slug will dart  
If but one hostile move my life assails.  
Keep calm and live—I in good time depart.

"Adieu, my friends, ye who in battle fell,  
To keep our flag, unsullied from the foe;  
Adieu! Ye died, but made a seething hell  
Of groans and mangled forms when you did throw

Against yon sinking hulk your shot and shell.

"I'll die with you! No tyrant's prison chain

Shall bind me fast to show abroad my shame;

To ask a coward's fate would foully stain  
The matchless glory of my country's fame,

And brand my honor with the foe's disdain.

"This wreck so wetted with your noble blood,

Shall never enter port as Nero's prize,  
But passes down to join the brotherhood  
Of crafts, whose worthy deeds immortalize

The death of those who at their cannons stood.

"Away, ye slaves that work a master's will,  
Your servile blood did paint your decks in vain,

For soon the moving spark the air will fill  
With human limbs, that scattering o'er the main,  
The shark will find with his accustomed skill.

"Ha, ha! ye go; the sainted flag ye sought,  
A thing of active life eludes your grip;  
So other times may learn how poorly wrought

Are all the thrones and crowns of Caesarship.

Farewell! I await the end my messmates bought."

Salt Lake City, Utah.

## OLD FALSEHOODS.

(By Harold Banning.)

Aye, tear our shattered bible down!

Long has it spread its lies,

And many a dupe has dance

To hear of heaven in the skies.

Before it rang the preacher's shout,

And burst the Christian roar;

That ancient Jewish story

Shall insult our minds no more.

Its pages red with victims' blood,

Were read by mankind's foes;

When priests were sailing o'er the flood,

To spread that faith by blows,

No more shall feel the believer's grasp,

Nor believers' eyes shall see,

The scholars of today have plucked

That old absurdity.

Oh, better that its shattered hulk

Should sink before the blaze;

Its readers plied the awful flame,

And there should be its grave.

Nail to its boards its ghastly tale,

Tell of its awful fame,

And give it to its mighty friends,

The whirling smoke and flame.

Mt. Vernon, Ohio.

## TO JOHN F. CLARKE.

(By a Friend.)

How sweetly you do tell

Of one who stormed the battlements of h—I.

Indeed, you prove an expert with the lyre  
Whenever you essay to sing of fire;

One would suppose to listen to your lay,

You have no fear of it yourself some day.

Beware, sweet singer, for dost thou not know

Warm regions yawn for sinners down below?

Where even snow-balls are served piping hot,

And cool by contrast is the pepper-pot;

Where little devils and a lot who are not small,

Turn handsprings night and day and cat-terwaul.

To sober thee a bit and make thee think,  
I'll take thee for a voyage to the brink;  
And hope as on its horrors you do gaze  
You will resolve at once to mend your ways.

The time is very short, O beauteous bard!  
Turn, turn thee round about and pedal hard.

Come with me into the awful pit—

The very thought of it gives a fit!

The sides are greased to make the ingress smooth—

But, O! alas, not even claw and tooth

Can pull one out again when once he's in,  
For no one ever up its sides did shin.

From out its blackened mouth a horrid smell

Doth plainly to the looker's nostrils tell

Of Limburger of hoary age and ripe—

(The only word that rhymes with that is tripe;)

Snakes, toads and lizards, and uncounted rats,

Wait patiently for unee, with myriad cats.

Devils there also be of visage grim,

Cry ceaseless, "Let US have a crack at him!"

Each with some torture that's entirely new  
—I dare not name them all, dear friend,

to you—

While rasping whiskey-tenors loudly sing  
Sweet roundelays unto the beauteous spring.

Uncounted Editors are there who make thee write,

And stuff the waste basket with great delight,—

Swiping thy stamps enclosed for its return,  
Or else thy writings 'fore thine eyes do burn.

When thou art thirsty as a billy goat,  
A hot-lead cock-tail is poured down thy throat.

I could continue, but is't not enough?

Suffice it then, to say the place is tough.

Be good and join the Moody-Sankey clan,

And from this day let this be all thy plan.

For if thou don't, I really hate to tell

How slim thy chances are of 'scaping h—I.

Baltimore, Md.

## BLUE GRASS BLADE

## FREE AMERICA.

(By J. H. Geyer.)

The Christian churches, one and all,  
Are bound some future day to fall  
Before the powers of Freethought,  
For which our great forefathers fought;  
The best will stand but a short while,  
Till comes the final test and trial,  
And then the people all shall see  
The U. S. A. as it ought to be.

When in Seventeen Seventy-Six  
The U. S. A. was in an awful fix,  
Who was it to their aid then came  
But the "brave and noble Thomas Paine?"  
The Independence clause he wrote,  
It sounded like music, word for note;  
And claimed this country to be free  
As the U. S. A. today should be.

But now he has gone away from here,  
Beneath the soil, without a fear,  
While we, the rising generation,  
Are going against the rules of this nation,  
By following old Mother England's belief—  
Disobey the church and you'll come to  
grief.

So let us all strive to be bold and free,  
As the grand U. S. A. ought to be.

Then in the future this nation will shine  
As a nation who holds no king sublime;  
There surely must be some power supreme,  
Although by man it has never been seen.  
So let us do unto one another,  
As though each were your living brother,  
And the future will hold no fear for thee,  
And the U. S. A. will forever be free.  
Canal Dover, O.

## THOUGHT MUST BE DIVINE.

(By J. E. Burkhart.)

A thinking man's akin to God,  
Great fountain of the mind;  
A quenchless flame in nature's clod  
All thinking men divined.

To think a thought must be divine,  
Supreme in peace, in rage of storm;  
Oh, mighty fortress, thought's sublime,  
'Tis here and there in human form.

To think a thought must be divine—  
Inspires friendship true and pure;  
Grander than the stars to shine,  
And leads to duty plain and sure.

In thought perhaps the weak is strong  
A herculean in might—  
To turn a tempest into song  
Of intellectual light.

Go get your thoughts from nature true,  
The budding rose or roaring sea,

The singing streams and arch of blue,  
Which sings of thought to thee.  
Miltonville, Kansas.

## Our Debate Has Done Good.

McCONNELLSVILLE, O.—Enclosed please find \$1.00, a trial subscription to the Blade. Send the same to Hanson Noyes, McConnelsville, Ohio, R. R. 3. Mr. Noyes is one of the Universalist faith, and he wants to read the Blade. The devout Baptist editor of the Democrat sent our manuscript back to me, stating that he could not publish it. And that Rev. McVey had sent him an article on the same subject and that he had refused that. We are going to try to get the Herald to publish it. We will report. The debate has done a great deal of good here, and we are going to keep the ball rolling. Yours for liberty.—J. D. HOOPER.

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